

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS ARTICLES ON JORDAN AIR DEFENSE

1. FOLLOWING ARE TEXTS OF ARTICLES APPEARING AUGUST 1 IN
THE NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST:

BEGIN TEXT (NYT)

U.S. SAYS JORDAN BARS SOVIET ARMS FOR AIR DEFENSES.
HUSSEIN IS REPORTED CLOSE TO PURCHASE OF AN AMERICAN SYSTEM
FOR DOLS. 540 MILLION. WASHINGTON RELIEVED. VETO BY
CONGRESS POSSIBLE, BUT IS DOUBTED--SAUDIS WOULD FINANCE
DEAL. BY BERNARD GWERTZMAN.

- WASHINGTON, JULY 31--JORDAN HAS DECIDED AGAINST TURNING
TO THE SOVIET UNION FOR ARMS AND IS REPORTED CLOSE TO
BUYING A DOLS. 540 MILLION AIR-DEFENSE SYSTEM FROM THE
UNITED STATES, ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAID TODAY.

- THE OFFICIALS, WHO WERE VIRTUALLY CERTAIN TWO MONTHS AGO
THAT THE JORDANIANS WOULD BUY A SIMILAR AIR-DEFENSE SYSTEM
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FROM MOSCOW, WERE CLEARLY RELIEVED AT KING HUSSEIN'S
DECISION TO RETAIN THE UNITED STATES AS HIS PRIME SUPPLIER
OF ARMS.

- THERE HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLE CONCERN IN WASHINGTON MOST

OF THE SPRING THAT FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, THE JORDANIANS WOULD ACCEPT SOVIET OFFERS TO SUPPLY A

SOPHISTICATED AIR-DEFENSE SYSTEM, OPENING JORDAN TO MAJOR SOVIET INFLUENCE FOR THE FIRST TIME.

- HUSSEIN VISITED THE SOVIET UNION LAST MONTH. A HIGH-LEVEL SOVIET DELEGATION HAD FLOWN TO AMMAN IN MAY TO DISCUSS JORDAN'S NEEDS.

FINANCING BY SAUDIS.

- THE PURCHASE FROM THE UNITED STATES COULD BE VETOED BY CONGRESS, BUT NO SUCH ACTION IS EXPECTED. THE PURCHASE WOULD BE FINANCED BY SAUDI ARABIA.

- SEVERAL FACTORS WERE BELIEVED AT WORK IN HUSSEIN'S DECISION, THE ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAID. FOREMORE WAS THE WILLINGNESS OF SAUDI ARABIA TO PAY AS MUCH AS DOLS. 540 MILLION FOR THE AIR-DEFENSE AFTER REFUSING FOR FOUR MONTHS TO GIVE THE JORDANIANS MORE THAN DOLS. 300 MILLION.

- APPARENTLY TO MAKE HIS PEACE WITH THE SAUDIS, KING HUSSEIN ACCEPTED THE RESIGNATION OF HIS CLOSE FRIEND, ZAID AL-RIFAI, AS PRIME MINISTER AND DEFENSE MINISTER. MR. RIFAI, WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN URGING THE KING TO ENHANCE JORDAN'S INTERNATIONAL TIES BY BUYING THE SYSTEM FROM MOSCOW.

- HE HAD INFURIATED THE SAUDIS AND SOME AMERICAN OFFICIALS, HOWEVER, BY SUGGESTING PUBLICLY THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD RAISED THE PRICE OF ITS AIR-DEFENSE SYSTEM AND THAT THE SAUDIS WERE UNWILLING TO PAY THE INCREASED COSTS--WHEN THAT WAS NOT TRUE.

FEAR OF SOVIET PRESENCE.

- MOREOVER, AMERICAN OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT HUSSEIN WAS BEING URGED BY HIS PRO-WESTERN CAREER MILITARY LEADERS TO GET THE AMERICAN SYSTEM AT ALL COSTS AND AVOID ANY POSSIBLE SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE.

- LAST YEAR THE JORDANIANS, AFTER A LONG SEARCH FOR A SOPHISTICATED AIR DEFENSE, NEGOTIATED WITH THE UNITED UNCLASSIFIED

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STATES ON PURCHASING A DOLS. 350 MILLION SYSTEM. IT WOULD INCLUDE 14 BATTERIES OF HAWK ANTIAIRCRAFT MISSILES, COSTING ABOUT DOLS. 260 MILLION, AND EIGHT BATTERIES OF VULCAN ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS COSTING ABOUT DOLS. 90 MILLION. -- IN ADDITION, THE UNITED STATES WOULD SELL JORDAN ABOUT 300 SHOULDER-FIRED REDEYE ANTIAIRCRAFT MISSILES FOR ABOUT DOLS. 4 MILLION.

- THE DEAL RAN INTO SOME OPPOSITION FROM ISRAELI SUPPORTERS IN CONGRESS. BUT BY LAST FALL IT WAS APPROVED. THE SAUDIS HAD PLEDGED THEY WOULD PAY FOR THE PURCHASE. LATE

LAST YEAR, HOWEVER, THE JORDANIANS BEGAN EXPANDING THE DEAL, TELLING AMERICAN OFFICIALS THEY WANTED A MORE

SOPHISTICATED SYSTEM.

TRAINING, PARTS, A DEPOT.

- FIRST, THE PRICE ROSE TO DOLS. 377 MILLION AND THE ADDITION OF TRAINING AND SPARE PARTS. THEN THE JORDANIANS DECIDED ON BUILDING THEIR OWN REPAIR DEPOT AND IN ESTABLISHING A COMMAND AND CONTROL SYSTEM THAT PUSHED THE PRICE TO DOLS. 593 MILLION, THE ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAID.
- THE JORDANIANS ADDED DOLS. 120 MILLION MORE THE THE PACKAGE FOR WHAT WAS CALLED A "MANAGEMENT RESERVE" TO TAKE INFLATION INTO ACCOUNT. THIS BROUGHT THE TOTAL COST TO DOLS 713 MILLION, WHICH, IN PUBLIC COMMENTS, R. RIFAI ROUNDED OFF TO DOLS 800 MILLION.
- DETAILS WERE NOT AVAILABLE ON WHAT ITEMS WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE DOLS 540 MILLION.
- INITIALLY, THE SAUDIS WERE TOLD BY THE JORDANIANS THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD RAISED THE PRICE. BUT WHEN THE SAUDIS COMPLAINED TO WASHINGTON THEY WERE TOLD THAT THE JORDANIAN DESIRES HAD CHANGED, BUT THE PRICE HAD NOT.
- AT THAT POINT, AMERICAN OFFICIALS BEGAN TO DESPAIR OF THE DEAL AND THE SOVIET UNION SEEMED EAGER TO MEET JORDAN'S NEEDS. THE RUSSIANS ARGUED THAT IF JORDAN BOUGHT THE SOVIET SYSTEM, IT WOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH SYRIA'S SOVIET-SUPPLIED AIR-DEFENSE SYSTEM.
- AMERICAN OFFICIALS SAID THAT THEY EXPECT THE ARRANGEMENT TO BE CONCLUDED SOON. THEY BELIEVE THE ANTI-COMMUNIST SAUDIS WERE EAGER TO KEEP THE SOVIET UNION OUT OF JORDAN, AND THIS INFLUENCED THEIR DECISION TO INCREASE UNCLASSIFIED

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THEIR GRANT TO JORDAN.
END TEXT.

BEGIN TEXT (POST)

SAUDIS TO BUY HAWK MISSILES FOR JORDANIANS. BY DON OBERDORFER.

- SAUDI ARABIA HAS AGREED TO PAY DOLS 540 MILLION TO BANKROLL A CONTROVERSIAL U.S. AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM FOR JORDAN TO HEAD OFF A JORDANIAN-SOVIET ARMS DEAL, FORD ADMINISTRATION SOURCES SAID YESTERDAY.
- THE SAUDI AGREEMENT, TRANSMITTED TO WASHINGTON ABOUT A WEEK AGO, IS EXPECTED TO BRING TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION 18 MONTHS OF NEGOTIATIONS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS OVER A SOPHISTICATED HAWK MISSILE SYSTEM THAT KING HUSSEIN OF JORDAN HAS ARDENTLY SOUGHT. THE ONLY REMAINING HURDLE

IS AGREEMENT ON THE SCHEDULE OF SAUDI PAYMENTS TO FINANCE THE U.S. WEAPONS.

- A SOVIET SALE TO JORDAN, DISCUSSED DURING HUSSEIN'S VISIT TO MOSCOW IN JUNE, WOULD HAVE BROUGHT SOVIET ARMS AND PERHAPS ADVISERS INTO THAT TRADITIONALLY PRO-WESTERN COUNTRY FOR THE FIRST TIME.

- IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT, THE ADMINISTRATION HAS BRIEFED CONGRESS ON PLANS TO SELL TO SAUDI ARABIA MAVERICK AIR-TO-SURFACE MISSILES AND AN EARLY VERSION OF THE "SMART BOMBS" IN INDOCHINA. THE WEAPONS WOULD BE FOR THE F-5 FIGHTER PLANES THE UNITED STATES HAS AGREED TO SELL THE SAUDIS.

- THE SAUDIS ALSO PLAN TO PURCHASE FROM THE UNITED STATES MORE TOW ANTITANK MISSILES, WHICH WERE FIRST SUPPLIED TO THAT COUNTRY SEVERAL YEARS AGO. TOW STANDS FOR TUBE-LAUNCHED OPTICALLY TRACKED WIRE-GUIDED.

- THE ADMINISTRATION EARLIER HAD ANNOUNCED IT IS CONSIDERING THE SALE OF SOME 2,000 SIDEWINDER AIR-TO-AIR MISSILES TO SAUDI ARABIA. SOME MEMBERS OF CONGRESS HAVE OBJECTED TO THE NUMBER INVOLVED, AS HAS THE ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY.

- THE SAUDIS AGREED LAST YEAR TO PAY DOLS. 343 MILLION FOR JORDAN'S AIR DEFENSE, WHICH IS TO BE DIRECTED MAINLY AGAINST ISRAEL, BUT BALKED WHEN THE PRICE BALLOONED TO DOLS. 792 MILLION.

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- U.S. SOURCES SAID THE COMPROMISE PRICE WILL PAY FOR THE 14 HAWK MISSILE BATTERIES AND 100 VULCAN ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS THAT JORDAN WANTED BUT NOT FOR A HUGE "CONTINGENCY" FUND AND OTHER EXTRAS THAT JORDAN ADDED TO THE DEAL.

- JORDAN, A DESERT-BOUND BUFFER STATE IN A STRATEGIC LOCATION BORDERING ISRAEL, HAS LONG BEEN VULNERABLE TO ATTACK FROM THE AIR. HUSSEIN'S MILITARY UNITS WERE BADLY CUT UP BY UNOPPOSED ISRAELI JETS IN THE JUNE, 1967, WAR. WHEN ISRAEL TOOK OVER LARGE PARTS OF JORDANIAN TERRITORY. HUSSEIN DECLINED TO TAKE PART IN THE 1973 EGYPTIAN-SYRIAN ATTACK ON ISRAEL, CITING JORDAN'S LACK OF AN EFFECTIVE AIR DEFENSE.

- THE UNITED STATES TURNED DOWN JORDAN'S BID FOR AN AIR DEFENSE PRIOR TO AND SHORTLY AFTER THE 1973 MIDDLE EAST WAR, BUT AGREED TO CONSIDER A MAJOR SALE LATE IN 1974 WHEN JORDAN OBTAINED A PROMISE OF FINANCING FROM SAUDI ARABIA.

- PRESIDENT FORD AGREED TO SELL THE HAWK MISSILE BATTERIES IN MEETINGS WITH HUSSEIN IN APRIL, 1975. A DEAL COSTING DOLS. 343 MILLION WAS SUBMITTED THAT SUMMER TO CONGRESS, WHERE STRONG OPPOSITION WAS EXPRESSED BY SUPPORTERS OF ISRAEL. CONGRESSIONAL OBJECTIONS WERE DROPPED ONLY AFTER MR. FORD PLEDGED THAT THE WEAPONS WOULD BE "FIXED, DEFEN-

SIVE AND NONMOBILE" AND AFTER HUSSEIN THREATENED TO TURN TO THE SOVIET UNION IF THE U.S. SYSTEM WAS NOT FORTHCOMING.

- ACCORDING TO PENTAGON OFFICIALS, THE PRICE GREW TO DOLS. 593 MILLION BY THE ADDITION OF COSTS FOR FOUR YEARS OF OPERATION, MAINTENANCE AND SPARE PARTS, COMMAND AND CONTROL RADAR, TEST SHOTS AND DEPOT FACILITIES. ALL EXCEPT THE LAST ARE SAID TO BE INCLUDED IN THE FINAL PACKAGE.

- AS PRESENTED BY JORDAN TO SAUDI ARABIA LAST DECEMBER THE

PLAN ALSO INCLUDED EXTRA CONSTRUCTION AND COMMAND-AND-CONTROL FEATURES AND A DOLS. 120 MILLION "CONTINGENCY FUND" FOR UNEXPECTED EXTRAS. WITH THESE ADDITIONS THE COST CAME TO DOLS. 792 MILLION, MORE THAN DOUBLE THE ORIGINAL ESTIMATE.

- THE SAUDIS, REPORTEDLY INFURIATED BY TRIPLED COST ESTIMATES ON SOME OF THEIR ARMS PURCHASES FROM THE UNITED STATES, REFUSED TO PAY MORE THAN DOLS. 350 MILLION. WHEN LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS, INCLUDING SOME DURING A HUSSEIN TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES FAILED TO IRON OUT THE TROUBLE
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THE JORDANIAN KING CALLED IN U.S. AMBASSADOR THOMAS R. PICKERING IN MID-MAY AND ANNOUNCED HE WAS TURNING TO MOSCOW FOR AIR DEFENSE NEGOTIATIONS.

- A FEW DAYS LATER, THE COMMANDER OF THE SOVIET AIR FORCE, MARSHAL PAVEL S. KUTAKOV, ARRIVED IN AMMAN. IN JUNE HUSSEIN FLEW TO MOSCOW WHERE HE WAS OFFERED A SOVIET SAM (SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE) SYSTEM ON COMMERCIAL TERMS AND SHOWN A VARIETY OF OTHER WEAPONS. U.S. SOURCES SAID HE WAS OFFERED MIG-23 JET AIRCRAFT AND MODERN T-62 TANKS, WHICH ARE SOLD SPARINGLY OUTSIDE THE COMMUNIST BLOC.

- ARMED WITH THE SOVIET OFFERS--WHICH DID NOT INCLUDE FINANCING--HUSSEIN FLEW TO RIYADH IN EARLY JULY TO SEE KING KHALID AND OTHER SAUDI OFFICIALS. A FEW DAYS AFTER THAT, HUSSEIN REPLACED HIS PRIME MINISTER, ZAID RAFAI, CONSIDERED AN ARCHITECT OF THE SOVIET TIES.

- THE SAUDI AGREEMENT TO PAY DOLS. 540 MILLION FOR THE U.S. SYSTEM FOLLOWED THESE MANEUVERS. IT IS EXPECTED TO FORECLOSE THE POSSIBILITY OF A DEAL WITH THE SOVIET UNION.
END TEXT. HABIB

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